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How we

The Mail on Sunday reveals that world famous UFO footage was made by Milton Keynes karaoke producers in a Home

By Nick Fielding
Chief Investigative Reporter

THE figures are hazy, the light poor, but there appears to be no doubt. Lying on a table, covered in a white fabric, is an alien, its skin grey and staring black eyes expressionless.

Two people hover around the extra-terrestrial and one of them begins to cut the fabric and remove handfuls of innards. Another, dressed in a long coat, appears fleetingly. This, according to those in the know, was US President Harry Truman.

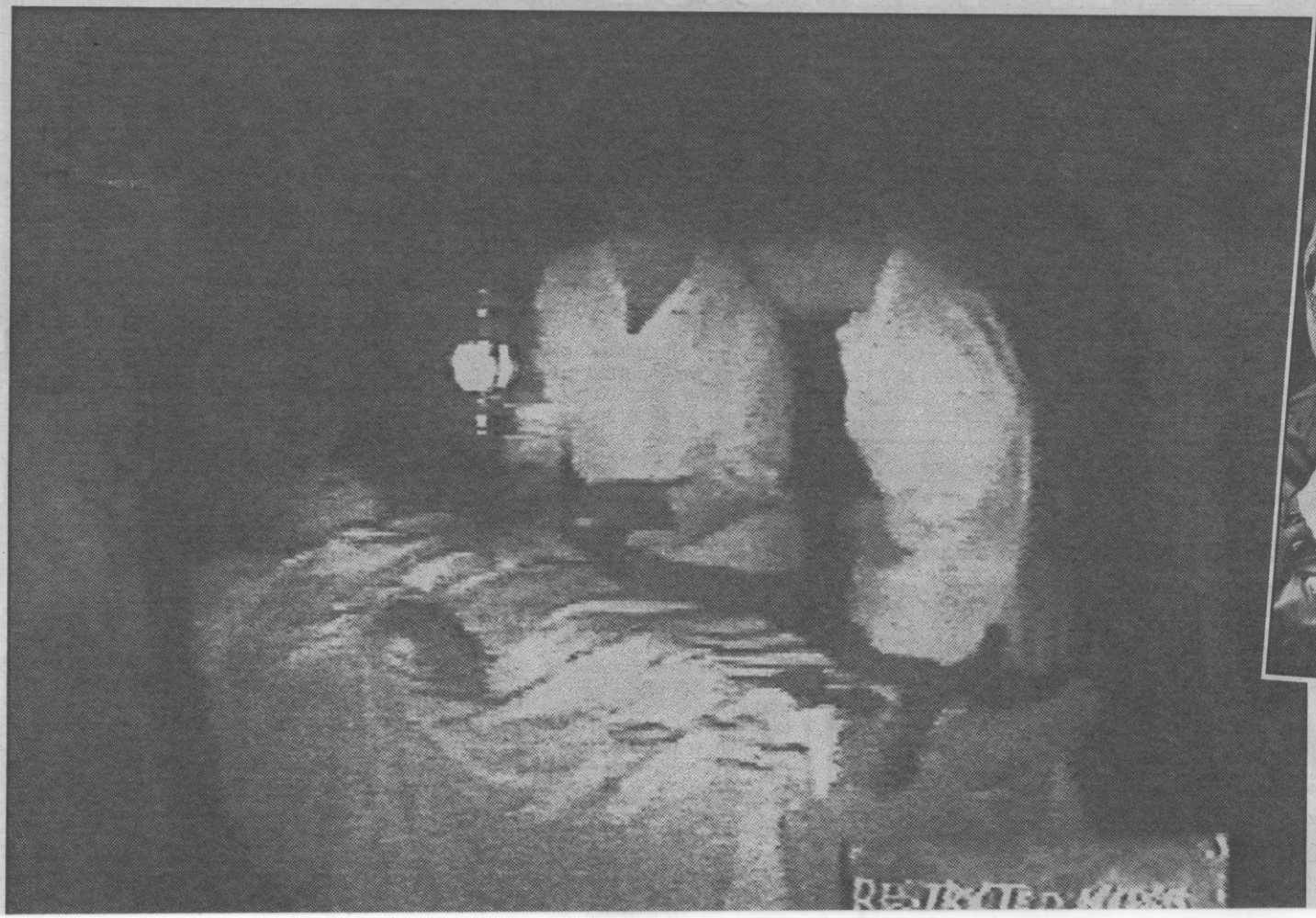
And then, after little more than a minute and a half, the grainy black and white film ends. Some versions contain a security coding in a corner: 'Restricted Access. A01 Classification. Subject 1 of 2. July 30th 1947'.

The so-called 'tent footage' purports to be an examination of an alien recovered from a spacecraft which crashed near the isolated New Mexico town of Roswell in 1947.

These few seconds of video, which first appeared in 1994, and another better-known segment of film – the 'alien autopsy' footage which appeared a year later – have intrigued UFO enthusiasts and generated lengthy debate on the Internet.

They have been shown on countless TV stations and subjected to every conceivable test to discredit them.

faked alien autopsy

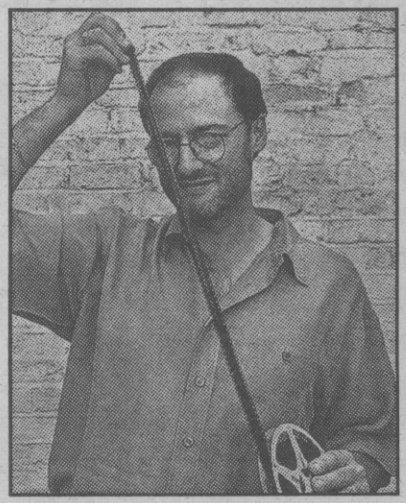


BARRY BEATTIE

UNMASKED: Bateman with the 'alien' head made from a wig holder

Flights of Fantasy

SHADY MOVES: The faked alien examination, filmed at night using paraffin lamps and a scarecrow's coat as props



FILM LAUNCH: Ray Santilli

UNDERCOVER OPERATION: Scene of the 'alien' encounter

conned and didn't think it was very good. He said it should have been clearer and should also have had a restricted notice on it.'

Bateman got the film back, superimposed the bogus classification message and sent it back to Santilli, who told the two men he could not use it.

Early in 1995, Bateman says, he was surprised to hear Santilli's friend and UFO enthusiast Reg Presley of Sixties pop group The Troggs mention the tent footage in an interview.

Despite having rejected their film, Santilli refused at this time to criticise it in public.

That summer, Bateman and Price-Watts decided to put their film out on a video being made by producer Bruce Barlow called Penetrating The Web 2. 'In the meantime Santilli had apparently acquired his alien autopsy film and, unknown to us, was planning a huge media launch in about a dozen different countries,' says Price-Watts.

'I had already got a slot on GMTV to talk about our film and when Ray heard about this he was not pleased. He flew back from a holiday in America and came straight to our offices, telling us our film would mess up his launch.

'He offered to pay us if we agreed not to promote the film for 10 weeks, which we agreed to.'

With his potential competitors out of the way, Santilli launched the main autopsy film around the world. Of much better quality than the tent footage, it purports to show an autopsy taking place in an operating theatre.

Despite knowing the background to the tent footage, Santilli adopted an ambiguous attitude to it.

'The first piece of film I saw at Santilli's office was the tent footage', says independent UFO researcher Philip Mantle. 'He said it came from a "scrap reel" from the army cameraman. It had been processed by some friends of his, but when he had taken it to America and shown it to the cameraman after processing, the man said he did not recognise segments of it.

'Only later did he admit it had been tampered with, although it now appears it was shot entirely in the UK.'

On numerous other occasions Santilli failed to state the truth about the tent footage, namely that it had been faked by people he knew.

In June 1995, for example, when asked during an Internet UFO conference if the people in the tent footage had been identified as actors or military personnel, he replied: 'Those seen in the tent footage have not yet been identified, but in time I am sure they will.'

The story resurfaced last year when a former colleague of Bateman and Price-Watts published some details on the Internet.

Bateman says the pair were pestered with calls, letters and e-mails after their names and addresses were published on the Internet and he even moved home after becoming worried about the safety of his family.

'That is why we have decided to talk now. We are fed up with the crazy UFO nuts for whom this story is the centre of their lives.'

Graham Birdsall, editor of UFO magazine, said most UFO researchers would be unsurprised to learn the tent footage had been faked.

He added: 'It clearly casts even more doubt on the so-called alien autopsy footage. It may only be a matter of time before the whole story comes out.'

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to the types of table lamps and clocks on the walls – no one has been able to crack the mystery of where they came from. Until now.

For we can reveal that the Roswell tent footage was shot in a barn in Bedfordshire by two men whose previous claims to fame included karaoke videos and another which featured animals singing nursery rhymes.

The official story, promoted by London-based video producer Ray Santilli, is that both films were shot by an anonymous former US army cameraman. Santilli claimed he had been offered the footage by the cameraman when he had been searching in the US for early film of Elvis Presley.

The truth, according to video producers Keith Bateman and Andy Price-Watts, is somewhat different.

Bateman and Price-Watts, whose company, AK Music, is based in Milton Keynes, say that in the summer of 1994 they were approached by Santilli, who they had known for many years and who occasionally bought some of their bizarre videos.

'We could hardly stop laughing'

Santilli told them he had a video of aliens, but it was of poor quality. Could they enhance it?

They tried, but could get nothing from the film. Santilli was disappointed and the matter was dropped. But knowing Santilli was in the market for this kind of material, Bateman and Price-Watts decided to try to make their own version.

Their research led them to a story already well established in UFO mythology – of how, after a spacecraft had supposedly crashed at Roswell, an alien had been taken to a barn nearby where a medical examination had taken place. President Truman was rumoured to have visited during the operation.

'We found a barn in the quiet village of Ridgmont, Bedfordshire, through a farmer I knew,' says Andy Price-Watts. 'I had an old paraffin lamp and we brought along a table, some sheets, overalls and rubber gloves.

Counties barn

'We filmed it in the evening to make it look as if it had been shot in the dark. The gloves – Marigolds – looked too modern so we had to discard them. We tried to get a mannequin from a local store, but it was impossible. Elstree Studios offered to make us one for £25,000, which was ludicrous.

'In the end we used a wig holder we bought for a few quid, which Elliot Willis, our tape operator, transformed using painted orange peel for the eyes. Elliot and the local butcher, Roger Baker, played the two medical staff. Roger got the part because he could supply the chicken guts we used as the alien's innards.

'We were thinking of using pig guts, but they looked too human.'

As they were filming, the farmer walked in to see what they were doing. 'I suddenly thought we could use him,' says Bateman. 'There was an old scarecrow in the corner of the barn and we got the coat from it, put it on him and he had a little cameo role as President Truman. We could hardly stop ourselves laughing as we shot the video, which took about an hour and a half to complete.'

Andy Price-Watts's 12-year-old son played the alien, with his head covered by the sheet and the dummy head placed on top.

'We used a Sony video camera on a tripod and kept jogging it to give the impression it was being held,' says Andy. 'The strange camera angles added to the veracity of the film'.

The resulting film was edited down to six minutes. Shot in colour, it was processed to black and white and animators in the studio drew scratch lines on computer and overlaid this on to the film. It was then transferred between different video formats to make it as grainy as possible.

'We then went to see Santilli and told him we had some alien footage which we had bought in the States,' says Bateman. 'He told us we had been